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TRADE UNIONISM IN CANADA

JUNE DEWETERING

ECONOMICS DIVISION  
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Cat. No.      **YM32-2/203E**  
ISBN            **0-660-13308-3**

**CE DOCUMENT EST AUSSI  
PUBLIÉ EN FRANÇAIS**



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TRADE UNIONISM IN CANADA

INTRODUCTION

In its one hundred and sixty-odd year existence organized labour in Canada has developed from a few small scattered groups of craftsmen to a large and complex organization. It comprises many thousands of local unions, several hundred national and international unions, and a number of national labour federations, with a total membership in excess of three million.(1)

The trade union movement in Canada, from its beginning in the early 1800s to the present day, has witnessed many fluctuations in the growth of union membership and many changes in the composition of that membership; it has survived Canadian involvement in two world wars, and it has adapted to changes in the economic, political and legislative environments.

This paper will examine the movement in Canada. The first section will review its historical background, while the second will examine union membership over time. After describing changes in the nature of bargaining proposals, the paper goes on to explore the future of the trade union movement in this country.

AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Canadian trade union movement had its origin in England, where skilled craftsmen formed benevolent societies or journeymen's clubs

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(1) J. Willes, Contemporary Canadian Labour Relations, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Toronto, 1984, p. 41.

to help unemployed members find work, and to support members in disputes with their employers over wages, working conditions and craft rights. These societies and clubs were instrumental in the development of the trade union movement in Canada, as "(t)hroughout the period of development the English trade union movement provided an important training ground for craftsmen who emigrated to ... Canada. These craftsmen took with them the ideas of collective bargaining and the methods of organization of the unions themselves. Upon their arrival in North America, their presence gave added impetus to the growth of the labour movement."(2)

Although unions had been formed around 1812 by employees engaged in shipbuilding on the east coast of Canada, the first Canadian union to remain in existence for any length of time was organized by printers in Toronto, in 1832. The East remained the main centre of union activity until the mid 1850s. In the early stages of the Canadian union movement, sickness and accident benefits were more important to members than was collective bargaining, since most employers produced for a local market and had a good working relationship with their few employees. As in Britain, early Canadian unions were largely local in outlook, since communities were relatively isolated and transportation and communication facilities were undeveloped. The union movement began to gain strength in the latter part of the nineteenth century when the development of the railway system opened up vast areas for agricultural, lumbering and mining and the immigrants who settled these areas created markets for manufactured goods produced by large manufacturing firms.

Since the support that they could provide was generally limited to the resources of their membership, local unions began to realize the potential benefits of a larger, national organization that would have greater resources and could coordinate the activities of various local unions. A step toward such an organization was taken in 1871 with the formation of the Toronto Trades Assembly, the largest and most influential

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(2) Ibid., p. 27.



of the local central organizations. Unions in most urban areas also formed local councils or assemblies around this time.

Improved transportation and communication allowed unionized craftsmen in both Canada and the U.S. to have more frequent contact with one another; this facilitated the growth of international unions. International unionism began in Canada in the 1850s in response to the desire of Canadian local unions to be part of something bigger and stronger that would make it easier for members to more freely move to the U.S. when Canadian jobs became scarce.

In Toronto in 1883, the Knights of Labor<sup>(3)</sup> and the Toronto Trades and Labour Council, formerly the Toronto Trades Assembly, formed the Dominion Trades and Labour Congress, later called the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC). The Congress included both traditional trade unions and assemblies of the Knights of Labor, and over time developed a close link with the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The TLC remained in existence, with some changes in membership affiliation, until the mid 1950s when it merged with the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL), formed in 1940, to form the Canadian Labour Congress.

From 1891 to 1897 the union movement in Canada experienced slowed growth, with declines in the membership of the Knights of Labor, no appreciable increase in local unions and slow growth in international unions. This period was followed by rapid expansion between 1898 and 1902, when strong organizing activity by the AFL resulted in a three-fold increase in the number of international locals.

The decade 1910-1920 witnessed volatile union membership levels, as they fell during the early years of the First World War before beginning to climb as the unemployment situation eased. War industries needed manpower, membership drives were carried out and membership levels rose, but pay increases achieved through collective bargaining were dissipated by rising costs.

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(3) The Noble Order of the Knights of Labor, founded in Philadelphia in 1869, organized all types of workers, the skilled and the unskilled, men and women, and small town workers. It began to organize in Canada in 1881.



The 1920s was a period of labour slowdown as organization halted, union membership levels declined and many unions collapsed, partly as the result of a rise in business-sponsored company unions. As mass production industries grew and new methods of manufacturing came into use, different and more aggressive methods were needed to organize the industrial work force. The TLC and its affiliates maintained their craft orientation and did not undertake organizing campaigns. By the early 1930s, the Congress had lost much of its membership, and was on the verge of bankruptcy, while other labour organizations had sprung up to challenge its control over the Canadian union movement. In 1935, the Committee for Industrial Organization was formed in the United States and quickly moved into Canada. The AFL expelled U.S. unions associated with the Committee for Industrial Organization and pressured the TLC to do the same with Canadian unions. Expelled unions in the U.S. formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). In 1940, the CIO-affiliates in Canada merged with the All-Canadian Congress of Labour<sup>(4)</sup> to form the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL), which was similar to the CIO in that it sought to organize on an industrial, rather than a craft, basis and to concentrate on the mass production industries.

As had been the case in World War I, the Canadian union movement made advances during the Second World War; again there was a shortage of labour to fill jobs in war industries, and again there was union membership growth. This period also witnessed an increase in union militancy, the issue in most cases being union recognition. Order-in-Council P.C. 1003, introduced in 1944, served to establish government machinery to enforce collective bargaining and union recognition, and

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(4) The ACCL's main objective was to organize workers on an industrial, rather than a craft, basis, unlike the TLC; it also sought to distance the Canadian labour movement from American control. The ACCL was badly hurt by the Great Depression of the 1930s.



to correct unfair labour practices; after the war, similar legislation was adopted by the provinces.<sup>(5)</sup>

Following the war, management attempted to limit the union movement's wartime gains, particularly in the areas of union recognition and security. An historic 99-day strike at the Ford plant in Windsor, Ontario, in 1945 led Justice Ivan Rand of the Supreme Court of Canada to provide for a compulsory check-off of union dues for all employees in the bargaining unit, whether union members or not; this provision has become known as the Rand formula.

Throughout the 1940s and the early 1950s, union conflict with management and government was at times secondary to the conflict within the union movement over who would control organized labour in Canada. The CCL and the TLC gradually moved closer together and united in 1956 to form the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). This followed the merger of the AFL and the CIO into the AFL-CIO in the U.S. The CLC is the largest organization of unions in Canada and the dominant voice of organized labour, although other federations, such as the Canadian Federation of Labour (CFL)<sup>(6)</sup> and the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU)<sup>(7)</sup> exist.

Chart 1 provides a capsule history of the Canadian trade union movement.

## TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP IN CANADA

Several aspects of trade union membership in Canada are examined here: membership levels, distribution by industry and by jurisdiction, and female membership.

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(5) At this point, it might be noted that labour relations in Canada is, for the most part, a provincial matter; the federal government's jurisdiction is limited to interprovincial industries or firms and those which fall within its specific jurisdiction.

(6) The CFL was founded in 1982 as a response to a growing rift between the CLC and the international building trade unions.

(7) The CNTU is largely Quebec-based.

### A. Membership Levels

As presented in Table 1, there were 3.781 million union members in Canada in 1987, showing the growth in the absolute number of union members that has continued since 1962,<sup>(8)</sup> except for a decline in 1983. Unionized workers in 1987, however, represented 37.6% of non-agricultural paid workers, a percentage that has been declining since 1983 when it was 40%, the highest in the period 1901-1987.<sup>(9)</sup>

Union density, defined as the proportion of the non-agricultural workforce that is unionized, is the most common measure of the extent of collective bargaining. Such figures are, however, more appropriate for measuring the potential for union organization, since they generally underestimate the impact of union activity.

Canadian labour relations statutes require that collective agreement provisions apply to all members in the bargaining unit, both union members and non-members. Thus, Table 1 reveals that in 1985, the latest year for which such data are available, 57% of all workers were covered by a collective agreement. More than half of all workers have been covered by such an agreement since 1971.

Several hypotheses have been advanced to explain the decline in the percentage of non-agricultural paid workers who are unionized; one is that government provision of certain social welfare benefits has substituted for private provision by unions, and so reduced the attractiveness of union membership.<sup>(10)</sup> In addition, there has been a shift from

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(8) Note, however, that data for 1979 are unavailable.

(9) See (8) above.

(10) George R. Neumann and Ellen R. Rissman, "Where Have All the Union Members Gone?" The Journal of Labour Economics, 1984, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 175.



employment in heavy-goods-producing industries,<sup>(11)</sup> thought to be more amenable to union organization, towards employment in service industries, historically more difficult to organize. The effects of this on unionization may have been exacerbated by plant closures in many goods-producing industries during the recession.

## B. International and National Union Affiliation

International union links between the United States and Canada were established as early as the 1860s and 1870s as craftsmen moved back and forth across the border. The impetus for such affiliation came from "... Canada's small, isolated local unions which sought support from the emerging national unions in the U.S."<sup>(12)</sup> Craft unions in both countries shared a common heritage and craft, and joined together to gain "strength in numbers." It has been estimated that by 1902 "approximately 95% of Canadian union members were in locals affiliated with a central union of the U.S."<sup>(13)</sup>

Since that time, however, there has been a radical shift in the proportion of Canadian union members affiliated with international unions, as indicated in Table 2. This percentage has been decreasing steadily from 66.9% in 1968 to 33% in 1988. At the same time, there has been an increase in the percentage of total Canadian union membership associated with national unions. In 1988, 63.1% of total union membership or 2,425,411 union members had a national affiliation. Again, it should be noted that such figures, representing union membership levels rather than collective bargaining coverage, understate the actual extent of national and international union affiliation. It might also be noted that not all unions are affiliated with either a national or an international union. They may also be directly chartered locals or independent local organizations; such instances are, however, rare, accounting for 3.9% of membership in 1988.

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(11) Ibid., p. 182. These industries include mining, construction, manufacturing, public utilities and transportation.

(12) Roy J. Adams, "Canada-U.S. Labor Link Under Stress," Industrial Relations, Vol. 15, No. 3, October 1976, p. 295.

(13) Ibid., p. 296.

Several reasons have been suggested for the shift toward national, rather than international, affiliation. These include allegations that:<sup>(14)</sup>

- ° American unions are less likely to consider Canadian concerns a high priority;
- ° international unions take more funds out of Canada, in the form of Canadian membership dues, than they put in;
- ° collective bargaining approaches differ in the two countries;
- ° Canadian unions are more militant than their American counterparts; and
- ° it is difficult to attract new union members to American-based unions.

The assumption is that national unions will more accurately reflect the concerns of Canadian workers and that association with national unions will keep membership fees in Canada. These benefits, however, must be weighed against the benefits of association with international unions, which include:

- ° access to a possibly larger pool of strike funds;
- ° a greater range and depth of bargaining experience; and
- ° more bargaining power in negotiations with U.S.-based multinational corporations.

One of the most publicized shifts away from international union affiliation occurred in 1985, when the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) separated from the international United Auto Workers (UAW). As part of a refinancing package for Chrysler in the early 1980s, the U.S. government had stipulated that Chrysler workers must concede wage rollbacks totalling \$259 million. Feeling that there was a difference between accepting wage cuts in an international agreement negotiated by the union, and accepting wage rollbacks dictated by the U.S. government, Canadian workers voted

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(14) "Home-Grown Unions," Canada and the World, September 1987, p. 9.



against participating in these government-imposed concessions, and were excluded from the international agreement with Chrysler. Discontent became more pronounced during negotiations with General Motors in 1984, and precipitated the 1985 formation of the 140,000-member national CAW.<sup>(15)</sup>

Such shifts in affiliation are continuing. At the 1986 Convention of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA), separation of the Canadian membership was approved. Effective in the spring of 1987, the 45,000 Canadian members became the national IWA-Canada.

To halt such shifts and encourage greater international affiliation, many international unions are restructuring in an effort to become more responsive to Canadian needs. In March 1987, 23,000 Atlantic fishery workers belonging to the international United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Union claimed that Canadian members were not being adequately served; their announcement that they wished to be represented by the national CAW resulted in legal action by the UFCW claiming that the CAW had "raided" the fishery workers. The dispute prompted restructuring of the UFCW, resulting in the establishment of a Canadian Council at a founding convention in March 1988. Also established was a Canadian Advisory Board to make recommendations to the Executive Board and ensure that Canadian members are represented on the Canadian Council. Further, the Council's constitution allows for a Canadian strike fund which will supplement that of the international union.

Finally, an April 1988 convention of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) saw a structural change to allow only Canadian members to elect their General Vice-President. Canadian representatives point out, however, that the restructuring is not to be interpreted as an attempt to separate from the international union.<sup>(16)</sup>

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(15) Bob White, "Goodbye, Detroit," Saturday Night, September 1987, p. 23-29.

(16) Industrial Relations Centre, The Current Industrial Relations Scene in Canada 1988, Queen's University, Kingston, p. 44.

### **C. Union Membership and Collective Agreement Coverage by Industry**

In December 1984 and December 1986, Statistics Canada conducted surveys supplementary to its monthly Labour Force Survey. Partial results of these surveys, as presented in Table 3, suggest that, for both periods and among all industries, the public administration industry had the highest level of union activity. This result holds whether the union activity is measured by the proportion of employed paid workers who are organized or the proportion covered by a collective agreement. The union activity in this industry was remarkably stable over the two periods. In 1986, 66.5% of the industry's employed paid workers were unionized and 75.1 were covered by a collective agreement; these figures are similar to the 1984 values of 66.6% and 74.7%, respectively. For both periods, the transportation industry was the second most important in terms of union activity, which again was relatively stable over the two periods. In 1986, 58.4% of the transportation industry's employed paid workers were unionized, while 62.9% were covered by a collective agreement; the 1984 figures were 60.0% and 64.2%, respectively. In both periods the agricultural industry had the lowest level of union activity. In 1986, 4.7% of this industry's employed paid workers were unionized and 5.4% were covered by a collective agreement; it is significant, however, that these levels are about double those of 1984, which were 2.3% and 2.8%, respectively.

According to these 1986 figures, there are several other industries with significant potential for union organization in the future, either because of their current low levels of union activity or because they are experiencing significant employment growth. For example, there is great scope for organization in the trade industry, and the finance, insurance and real estate industry where, as noted in Table 3, in 1986 only 12.9% and 9.2%, respectively, of employed paid workers were unionized. The service sector, which has experienced average annual employment growth of 3% since the end of the recession, also includes the transportation, communication and other utilities, community, business and personal service, and public administration industries. As significant growth in this sector is expected to continue, union organization potential exists in many of these industries.



#### **D. Collective Agreement Coverage by Jurisdiction**

As indicated in Table 4, Saskatchewan had the highest level of union activity among all provinces in 1985, with 72% of its employees covered by a collective agreement. Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and British Columbia followed, with at least 67% of employees in each covered by such provisions. Every province had at least half of its employees so covered in that year, except Alberta, with 49%. In 1984, all provinces had had at least half of their employees under collective agreement coverage, with Ontario the lowest at 51%.

#### **E. Female Union Membership**

As indicated in Table 5, women's union membership has increased steadily over the 1965-1985 period, both in numbers and as a percent of all union members. In 1985, the 1,264,600 female union members represented 36.2% of all union members. This growth in female membership is especially significant given the general supposition that, for a variety of reasons, for example because women often work part-time and in service industries, women are harder to organize than men.

Future union growth may depend on being able to organize female employees, as their numbers in the labour force and in the growing industries are predicted to increase. Substantial growth potential exists, as Table 5 also reveals that only 28.4% of all female paid workers were union members in 1985. In order to attract women members, however, new organizing techniques and more female representation on union committees may be required.

### **THE CHANGING GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

As the result of alterations in external and internal environments, union and management goals and priorities have been changing over time. Whereas unions were once primarily interested in achieving wage gains for their members, their focus is now often on gaining job security

provisions. Management, for its part, is seeking concessions from unions in order to realize the lower costs needed to remain competitive; it is also seeking greater flexibility and improved productivity.<sup>(17)</sup>

### A. Concession Bargaining

Although instances of concession bargaining since the Depression of the 1930s had been confined largely to individual industries experiencing severe structural change, they became much more widespread during the recession in the early 1980s. Unions often understood the cost and competitive pressures on management, and were willing to make concessions in some areas in exchange for improvements in others, thereby contributing to the future viability of the enterprises. In many instances, concession agreements have expanded the bargaining agenda to include such issues as the introduction of technological change and strategic business decisions. Because of the economic pressures on management, union gains are likely to be in areas that will lead to only minimally higher labour costs.<sup>(18)</sup> Some of the gains are symbolic; for example, equality-of-sacrifice clauses, under which management must endure employment and wage freezes or cuts similar to those of the union, and management commitments to consider union interests in future actions. Although such symbolic improvements essentially leave union members no better off financially, they do serve the political function of illustrating that the union does still have some bargaining power and that concessions are being made by all parties.

Explicit and implicit job security provisions have also been negotiated. Explicit provisions include management agreements to limit layoffs, while implicit provisions affect employment levels by influencing business decisions. Examples of the latter are management agreements to limit the contracting out of work and guarantees of plant investment.

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(17) "Management-Labour Relations: Tough Negotiations Ahead," Canadian Business Review, Summer 1987, p. 23-24.

(18) Alton W.J. Craig, The System of Industrial Relations in Canada, Second Edition, Prentice-Hall Canada, Scarborough, 1986, p. 193-194.



Contingent compensation arrangements that link future compensation improvements to the organization's economic performance and profitability have also been sought in concession bargaining. Profit-sharing and stock-ownership plans are examples of such arrangements.

Further, unions have been able to negotiate formal arrangements, such as union representation on company boards and shop floor participation plans, that will allow them to take a more active role in business decisions. Such arrangements often allow union access to information about the organization's financial performance and future plans and thus may influence negotiating sessions for some time in the future. Management efforts to limit what is sometimes seen as union intrusion into traditional management jurisdiction have included limiting union participation to a particular issue at a given point in time.

Concession agreements are generally thought to be advantageous to all parties. Through union concessions, management may be able to contain costs, as needed for viability. Through management concessions, unions may be able to improve the job security of bargaining unit members, and broaden the bargaining agenda to gain influence in new areas. Concession bargaining is not, however, without its problems. Management fears concessions may lead to a surrender of management prerogatives, and unions are reluctant to concede hard-fought for gains. D. Quinn Mills suggests that employee relations are permanently altered as a result of the concessions granted.<sup>(19)</sup> On the one hand, employees lose faith in management's competence and their sense of job security and commitment to the organization; on the other hand, employees expect a continuing role in the operation of the organization and a greater share of the organization's profits. Mills concludes that concession bargaining may lead to a more cooperative and less confrontational relationship where management and

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(19) D. Quinn Mills, "When Employees Make Concessions," Harvard Business Review, May-June 1983, p. 103-113.

union view themselves as part of a management team working toward the long-term viability and profitability of the organization.

## **B. The Impact of Concession Bargaining on Wage Settlements**

As mentioned earlier, one area where management sought concessions during the recessionary period was wage settlements. Table 6 reveals the number and percent of settlements that provided for a wage cut or freeze over the 1983-1987 period. In 1983, for example, there were 71 such settlements or 11% of the total: these consisted of 14% of private sector settlements, and 9% of public sector settlements. In 1984, 25% of all settlements, 27% of private and 23% of public, contained such a clause. Following 1984, the incidence of such clauses decreased to only 3% of settlements in 1987, the lowest percent in the 1983-1987 period.

Further, Table 7 indicates that a significant portion of settlements in the 1982-1987 period provided for wage increases below the rate of inflation; thus, many employees experienced a decline in their real wage. For example, in 1982, 49% of all settlements provided for a wage increase less than the inflation rate, as did 92% of federal public sector settlements. For the 1983-1986 period, the percent of settlements with such a provision was never less than 46% for the public or private sector, individually or jointly. The incidence of wage settlements below the rate of inflation increased markedly in 1987, to 87% of the total, 90% of settlements in the private sector and 85% of those in the public sector; 100% of federal public sector wage settlements were below the inflation rate.

These results suggest that in the future, once job security has been relatively assured, employees will seek wage settlements that are at least equal to the expected inflation rate. In fact, in an effort to make up for past real wage losses, they may seek settlements substantially greater than the inflation rate. Further, an increasing proportion of settlements may contain cost-of-living allowance (COLA) provisions linking wage changes to changes in the rate of inflation.



### **C. Management Goals and Priorities**

To remain competitive with low-cost foreign and domestic producers, management will continue to seek union concessions in order to achieve lower costs and improved productivity. One area where management will seek cost containment is compensation. Often, management proposes:

- ° wage freezes or cuts;
- ° the elimination or postponement of cost-of-living allowances;
- ° multi-tier wage schemes;
- ° lump-sum payments rather than annual wage increases;
- ° remuneration linked to individual performance; and
- ° remuneration based on the organization's profitability and other profit-sharing schemes.

Management will also negotiate for greater flexibility in working arrangements, pressing for:

- ° the elimination of restrictive work rules;
- ° greater use of part-time employment and sub-contracting; and
- ° changes in job classification and seniority systems.

### **D. Union Goals and Priorities**

Despite management efforts, unions will negotiate to achieve wage gains and limit management flexibility with respect to work arrangements. Another area of continuing importance, however, will be job security; this is particularly relevant in view of rapid technological change, high levels of unemployment, and excess plant capacity, closures and retrenchment. Union efforts to enhance job security provisions will continue to include:

- ° more effective layoff and seniority provisions;

- ° longer advance notice in the event of labour demand changes and the introduction of new technology;
- ° greater consultation with the union prior to such changes;
- ° improved training, retraining and job transfer provisions;
- ° enhanced supplementary unemployment benefits, severance pay, pension and early retirement provisions;
- ° voluntary early retirement with full pension rights;
- ° reductions in worktime and sharing of available work;
- ° restrictions on overtime as a means of distributing existing work;
- ° contract provisions regarding the introduction of technological change; and
- ° a halt to subcontracting.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the union movements in Britain and Canada followed similar patterns of development, due in large part to the migration to Canada of many skilled British workmen who brought with them their knowledge and experience of the trade union movement. In addition, international unions have been a major contributing factor to the nearly parallel development of the U.S. and Canadian union movements. Over time, unions have evolved from being organizations in restraint of trade to being the accepted voice of organized labour.

The percentage of non-agricultural paid workers who are unionized, 37.6% in 1987, has been declining since 1983, although the absolute number of union members is continuing to grow. A more accurate indicator of the impact of collective bargaining, the percentage of workers covered by a collective agreement, has been relatively stable for the past decade at around 58%. Coincident with a decline in association with international unions has been an increase in national affiliation; in 1987,



about 61% of union members were associated with national unions and 35% with international unions. In 1984 and 1986, the industries with both the highest percent of union membership and the largest degree of collective bargaining coverage were public administration and transportation; agriculture had the lowest in terms of both measures. Both the number of women union members and women members as a percentage of total union membership have been increasing over time. Finally, in 1985 all provinces had more than 50% of their employees covered by a collective agreement, except Alberta, which had 49%.

Finally, increased competitive pressures will continue to lead management to seek concessions in bargaining. These pressures will come from foreign producers, which often have lower costs, and from domestic sources, both union and non-union. It might be noted that trends toward deregulation will continue to increase domestic competitiveness. The incentive for unions to agree to concessions will depend on whether the resulting lower labour costs would improve the firm's competitive position and enhance employment security. Even where concessions would not save a firm, they might allow it to operate long enough for displaced workers to find alternative employment. The economic environment in the future will continue to shape the collective bargaining goals and priorities of both management and unions.

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## CHART 1

### CAPSULE HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

DATE	EVENT
1812	Unions formed on the east coast of Canada, giving rise to the organization of many isolated local unions
latter 19th century	Union movement began to gain strength with the development of a transportation network
1859	International unionism began in Canada
1871	Formation of the Toronto Trades Assembly, which remained in existence until 1878
1872	Toronto printers' strike led to the enactment of the <u>Criminal Law Amendment Act</u> and the <u>Trade Union Act</u>
1881	Knights of Labor began organization in Canada
1883	Knights of Labor and the Toronto Trades and Labour Council, formerly the Toronto Trades Assembly, formed the Dominion Trades and Labour Congress, later called the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC)
1902	TLC Berlin Convention, where the TLC expelled the Knights of Labor and all other unions not affiliated with international unions
1903	National Trades and Labour Congress, renamed the Canadian Federation of Labour (CFL) in 1909 and in existence until 1927, was formed by unions expelled from the TLC
1935	Committee for Industrial Organization was formed
1937	American Federation of Labour (AFL) expelled unions associated with the Committee for Industrial Organization, and urged the TLC to do the same
1938	Expelled unions formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)

DATE	EVENT
1940	Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) was formed by CIO-affiliates expelled by the TLC and the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL)
1944	Order-in-Council P.C. 1003 passed
1945	The Rand formula was provided, which gave unions some security
1955	Merger of the AFL and the CIO
1956	Merger of the TLC and the CCL to form the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)
1982	Canadian Federation of Labour (CFL) formed



TABLE 1

UNION MEMBERSHIP AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING COVERAGE IN CANADA,  
1901-1987

	Total membership ('000)	Membership as % of non- agricultural paid workers	Proportion of workers covered by a collective agreement
1901			
1906			
1911	133		
1916	160		
1921	313	18.4 <sup>4</sup>	
1926	275	13.6 <sup>4</sup>	
1931	311	15.3	
1936	323	16.2	
1941	462	18.0	
1946	832	27.9	
1949	1,006 <sup>2</sup>	29.5	
1950	-- <sup>3</sup>	-- <sup>3</sup>	38
1951	1,029	28.4	39
1952	1,146	30.2	40
1953	1,220	33.0	40
1954	1,268	33.8	40
1955	1,268	33.7	39
1956	1,352	33.3	39
1957	1,386	32.4	
1958	1,454	34.2	
1959	1,459	33.3	51
1960	1,459	32.3	50
1961	1,447	31.6	48
1962	1,423	30.2	48
1963	1,449	29.8	46
1964	1,493	29.4	47
1965	1,589	29.7	43
1966	1,736	30.7	44
1967	1,921	32.3	44
1968	2,010	33.1	44
1969	2,075	32.5	47
1970	2,173	33.6	
1971	2,231	33.6	51
1972	2,388	34.6	53
1973	2,591	36.1	54
1974	2,732	35.8	56
1975	2,884	36.9	56
1976	3,042	37.3	57

TABLE 1 (cont'd)  
UNION MEMBERSHIP AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING COVERAGE IN CANADA,  
1901-1987

	Total membership ('000)	Membership as % of non- agricultural paid workers	Proportion of workers covered by a collective agreement
1977	3,149	38.2	57
1978	3,278	39.0	58
1979	na	na	58
1980	3,397	37.6	58
1981	3,487	37.4	59
1982	3,617	39.0	58
1983	3,563	40.0	59
1984	3,651	39.6	58
1985	3,666	39.0	57
1986	3,730	37.7	
1987	3,781	37.6	

1 The data series was discontinued in 1985.

2 Includes Newfoundland for the first time.

3 Data on union membership for all years up to and including 1949 are as of December 31. In 1950 the reference date was moved ahead by one day to January 1, 1951. Thus, while no figure is shown for 1950, the annual series is, in effect, continued without interruption. The data on union membership for subsequent years are also as of January 1.

4 These figures are estimated using census wage earner data.

Source: Labour Canada, Directory of Labour Organizations in Canada, Working Conditions in Canadian Industry, and Labour Gazette.



TABLE 2

MEMBERSHIP OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL UNIONS IN CANADA,  
1956-1988

INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATION			NATIONAL AFFILIATION		DIRECTLY CHARTERED AND INDEPENDENT LOCALS	
Membership	%		Membership	%	Membership	%
1956	947,498	70.1	338,632	25.1	65,522	4.8
1957	990,469	71.5	336,708	24.3	59,008	4.3
1958	1,062,315	73.1	331,747	22.8	59,938	4.1
1959	1,055,690	72.4	325,892	22.3	76,994	5.3
1960	1,051,997	72.1	320,118	21.9	87,044	6.0
1961	1,040,208	71.9	323,486	22.4	83,248	5.8
1962	1,024,969	72.0	334,747	23.5	63,067	4.4
1963	1,031,658	71.2	350,918	24.2	66,605	4.6
1964	1,062,054	71.1	365,536	24.5	65,583	4.4
1965	1,124,741	70.8	389,746	24.5	74,268	4.7
1966	1,219,482	70.2	445,163	25.6	71,195	4.2
1967	1,272,884	66.3	575,663	29.9	72,100	3.8
1968	1,345,331	66.9	590,260	29.4	74,142	3.7
1969	1,346,114	65.0	649,887	31.3	78,615	3.7
1970	1,359,346	62.5	752,373	34.6	61,388	2.8
1971	1,371,109	62.0	771,177	34.9	68,268	3.1
1972	1,411,852	59.6	892,691	37.7	66,098	2.7
1973	1,443,246	55.3	1,098,763	42.1	67,627	2.6
1974	1,450,399	53.2	1,187,539	43.6	88,206	3.2
1975	1,478,583	51.4	1,324,076	46.1	72,805	2.5
1976	1,508,078	49.6	1,424,965	46.8	109,229	3.6
1977	1,544,717	49.0	1,492,093	47.4	112,403	3.6
1978	1,553,477	47.4	1,637,626	50.0	86,865	2.6
1979						
1980		46.3				
1981	1,557,792	44.7	1,812,983	52.0	116,456	3.3
1982	1,599,705	44.2	1,876,121	51.9	141,502	3.9
1983	1,470,433	41.3	1,945,982	54.6	146,384	4.1
1984	1,461,693	40.0	2,049,756	56.1	139,055	3.8
1985						
1986						
1987	1,324,182	35.0	2,319,024	61.3	138,279	3.7
1988	1,265,797	33.0	2,425,411	63.1	150,283	3.9

Source: Labour Canada, Directory of Labour Organizations in Canada, (annual).

UNION MEMBERSHIP AND COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT COVERAGE  
OF EMPLOYED PAID WORKERS BY INDUSTRY IN CANADA,  
DECEMBER 1984 AND DECEMBER 1986

Industry	Actual Number ('000)						Percentage		
	Union			Non-Union			Unionized	Covered by Collective Agreement	
				Total					
	1984	1986		1984	1986	1984	1986	1984	1986
Total	3,473.8	3,527.8		5,860.2	6,442.4	430.3	448.5	37.2	35.4
Agriculture	2.1	5.6		87.3	112.5	0.4	nr	2.3	4.7
Forestry	20.6	17.5		35.6	39.6	2.1	nr	36.7	30.6
Fishing	3.5	nr		3.6	9.2	0.1	nr	nr	nr
Mining	59.8	57.7		122.8	112.8	6.8	7.4	32.8	33.9
Manufacturing	856.2	789.9		1,047.5	1,110.3	76.5	99.1	45.0	41.6
Construction	145.8	152.1		229.5	285.2	13.1	10.1	38.8	34.8
Transportation, etc.	462.6	473.6		308.5	337.0	32.6	36.1	60.0	58.4
Trade	201.3	227.3		1,411.4	1,533.5	56.0	53.8	12.5	12.9
Finance, insurance and real estate	47.8	592.2		471.1	538.0	19.0	15.1	9.2	9.2
Services	1,159.3	1,200.2		1,884.4	2,088.9	161.3	151.6	38.1	36.5
Public administration	514.9	547.0		258.4	275.4	62.5	70.7	66.6	66.5
								74.7	75.1

nr not reportable due to publication restrictions where the estimate is less than 4,000 or the coefficient of variation exceeds 33.3%

Source: Compiled from data presented on pages 385 and 396 of The Current Industrial Relations Scene in Canada 1986, and pages 485-487 of The Current Industrial Relations Scene in Canada 1988, Industrial Relations Centre, Queen's University, Kingston; their data source was Statistics Canada's unpublished data from the Survey of Union Membership, December 1984 and the Labour Market Activity Survey, December 1986.



TABLE 4

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT COVERAGE BY JURISDICTION IN CANADA, 1964-1985  
PERCENT OF EMPLOYEES COVERED

Jurisdiction	1964	1974	1984	1985
Canada	47	56	58	57
Newfoundland	50	66	68	68
Prince Edward Island	38	68	73	69
Nova Scotia	48	57	59	57
New Brunswick	42	62	65	64
Quebec	47	58	64	64
Ontario	45	52	51	50
Manitoba	44	53	63	62
Saskatchewan	43	56	71	72
Alberta	35	52	53	49
British Columbia	65	67	70	67

Source: Industrial Relations Centre, The Current Industrial Relations Scene in Canada 1987, Queen's University, Kingston, p. 382; data from Labour Canada, Working Conditions in Canadian Industry and unpublished data. The survey was discontinued beginning in 1986.

**TABLE 5**  
**WOMEN MEMBERS OF UNIONS IN CANADA, 1965-1985**

	Actual Membership ( '000)	As a % of All Union Members	As a % of Female Paid Workers
1965	292.1	16.6	15.5
1966	323.0	17.0	15.9
1967	407.2	19.8	18.8
1968	438.5	20.4	19.4
1969	469.2	21.2	20.1
1970	513.2	22.6	21.5
1971	558.1	23.5	21.7
1972	575.6	24.2	21.4
1973	635.9	24.6	22.2
1974	676.9	25.2	22.4
1975	711.1	26.0	22.9
1976	750.6	27.0	23.1
1977	782.3	27.7	23.5
1978	835.3	28.7	23.3
1979	890.4	29.3	24.3
1980	932.9	30.2	24.2
1981	979.9	31.0	24.2
1982	985.4	32.3	24.7
1983	1,179.2	34.8	28.8
1984	1,219.2	35.4	28.9
1985	1,264.6	36.2	28.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Annual Report Under the Corporations and Labour Unions Returns Act, Part II - Labour Unions. Paid workers figures from Statistics Canada, Historical Labour Force Statistics.

TABLE 6

WAGE CUTS/FREEZES IN SETTLEMENTS IN CANADA,  
1983-1987

Number of Agreements	YEAR				
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
All Industries	71	139	76	66	12
Public Sector	41	61	51	19	4
Private Sector	30	78	25	47	8
Incidence <sup>(1)</sup>					
All Industries	11	25	15	13	3
Public Sector	9	23	17	6	2
Private Sector	14	27	13	22	4

(1) Incidence is the percent of settlements in a category which provided for a wage cut or freeze.

Source: Industrial Relations Centre, The Current Industrial Relations Scene in Canada 1988, Queen's University, Kingston, p. 678; their source is Labour Canada, Major Wage Settlements and unpublished data.



TABLE 7

INCIDENCE<sup>1</sup> OF WAGE SETTLEMENTS BELOW THE RATE  
OF INFLATION IN CANADA, 1982-1987

SECTOR	YEAR					
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
All Sectors	49	57	52	49	61	87
Private Sector	49	54	58	50	59	90
Public Sector						
All	49	59	46	48	63	85
Federal	92	33	41	100	93	100
Provincial	43	56	40	60	54	81
Local	13	70	47	9	68	87
Health	23	45	60	70	58	94
Education	55	68	43	45	51	81

(1) Incidence is the percent of settlements in a category which provided for a wage change less than the inflation rate.

Source: Industrial Relations Centre, The Current Industrial Relations Scene in Canada 1988, Queen's University, Kingston, p. 679; their source is Labour Canada, Major Wage Settlements and unpublished data.



